

Substantive 1772

PRIMITIVE BAPTISM,

And therein

INFANTS

AND

PARENTS RIGHT.

MATTH. 19. 6.

*What God hath joined together, let no Man put
asunder.*



L O N D O N,

Printed for Jonathan Robinson, at the
Golden-Lion in St. Paul's Church-
Yard, MDCXC.

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43249.15.

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BAPTIST

IN A
PARTS EIGHT



LONDON
Printed by J. G. & Co. at the
Church-
Museum.

TO THE
READER.

THE Author of these Papers is one whom I have known long since to be a person of great Reputation for Knowledge, Wisdom, Gravity and Seriousness. A Person not only skillful and diligent in his particular Calling, and beautiful in his Christian Conversation, but also a diligent and judicious Reader and Observer of the Sacred Scriptures; and, so far as I could either learn of others, or my self discern by Conversation with him, an impartial searcher after Truth, and readily receptive of it in its discerned Evidence: and consequently not tenacious of any Sentiments or Opinions through humour, interest, and self-conceitedness where

To the Reader.

any reasons do appear to prove them false, or probably uncertain or unsafe. That this small Tract is his, I have great reason to believe: It is small, nervous, and clear, as to the great Design thereof; of which, the Title is a sufficient indication and account; but let the matter speak for it self, and force its way into the Readers breast by its own Strength, carried home by God's blessing thereupon to such degrees as He sees fit, who is the Original source and Fountain, Patron, and End of Truth. I shall only add, That when our Brethren who judge it improbable, that any Infants had their solemn admission into the Church of Christ in Scripture-times by the instituted rite of Christian Baptism, have tryed their Strength upon what is here offer'd, and scripturally prov'd, and have effectually Answered what is here briefly, and in other Books, more copiously demonstrated and improved, they may probably gain more Proselytes

To the Reader.

tehytes to themselves. Read carefully; think deeply, pray fervently, design honestly, judg impartially, and give Christ's evident Truths, Laws, Institutions, their just receptions and improvement; and take in nothing for Truth or Duty for the sake of any Man, but yield to Evidence; and this will be most grateful,

(Candid and Christian Reader,)

To thine in and for our

Blessed Lord,

whilst

M. SYLVESTER.

A 3

PRE-

P R E F A C E.

AS Civil Right is one of the great controverted Points in the World ; so is Religious Right in the Church.

What is here offered concerning Infants and Parents Right in the Church, is a short Discourse maintained against two different Practices; the One withholding Baptism from Infants of baptized Parents; the Other withholding such Parents from their Infants in Baptism.

The Arguments brought against these Practices, are those brought by Christ against a Practice of the like Nature, namely, that it is a putting asunder those whom God hath joined together; and that from the beginning it was not so.

Which Arguments are not insisted upon as suspecting the strength of other Arguments, but as agreeing therewith, and the better to clear up the Apostolical Practice in these things.

All submitted to superior Judgments.

Primitive

Primitive Baptism.

GOD who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son: Who (that our Religion and Manners, Faith and Worship, may be after the due Order) hath commanded us to search the Scriptures, containing Rules and Directions, Precepts and Examples, always evident and perfect in their kind, though not always alike express.

The Sadduces finding no express mention of the Resurrection in the Books of Moses, (which they emphatically called the Scriptures) not only denied the Resurrection, but framed Arguments from those Scriptures against it; One whereof they thought so unanswerable, that they encountred Christ himself with it, *Mat. 22. v. 23, 24*, &c. Christ observing their Confidence, reproves them as plainly both of Error, and the Cause thereof, in these Words, *ver. 29. Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the Power of God*; and from the Scriptures proves the Resurrection.

Which Words of Christ, *Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the Power of God*, may have a double Aspect, one unto the Scripture, from whence they framed their Argument against the

Resurrection, and another unto the Scripture, which he brings to prove the Resurrection by.

That the *Sadduces* did not know the Scriptures literally, or the Power of God historically, cannot be the meaning of Christ; but take the Words as having an Eye to that Scripture brought by them, (*ver. 24.*) from whence they raised their Argument against the Resurrection, and the Sense may be such as this:

Ye *Sadduces* say that there is no Resurrection, and you seem very big of your Opinion, as if you were in the right, and had Scripture on your side, and could from the Scripture prove it impossible; but I tell you, Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the Power of God; for though that be Scripture which ye have quoted, yet ye, not comparing it with other Passages of the same Sacred Writings, nor Spiritual Things with Spiritually, do not hold the Analogy of Faith contained in the Scriptures; but speak evil of those things which ye know not, whilst what you know naturally as brute Beasts, in those things you corrupt your selves. For that the Dead are raised, even *Moses* shewed at the Bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of *Abraham*, and the God of *Isaac*, and the God of *Jacob*, for he is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living, for all live unto him. And though you pretend to know God, yet you glorify him not as God, nor consider that Power belongs unto him, else why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the Dead? Neither are your Notions of the future State, to which the Dead are raised by his Infinite and Almighty Power,

Power, suitable to those high and excellent Apprehensions which you ought to have of it, for in the Resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in Marriage, neither do they die any more, but are as the Angels of God in Heaven. Ye therefore do greatly err.

But taking the Words of Christ, as having a respect to the Scripture which he brings to prove the Resurrection by, (*ver. 32.*) and then the meaning may be this, or such like :

Ye deny that there is any Resurrection, and conclude that you must be in the right, because you find no express mention of it in the Scriptures, and as if the Incapacity of the Dead made it impossible with God ; but do you not therefore err, because you know not the Scriptures, nor the Power of God ? For though it be not expressly said that the Dead are raised, yet know that there is sufficient Proof for it in Scripture, by good and warrantable Inference from Scripture : For as touching the Resurrection of the Dead, have you not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, *Mat. 22. 31.* and the God of Jacob ? from

whence you might have attained unto the knowledge of the Resurrection as satisfyingly, as if it had been expressly said, that the Dead are raised ; for God is not a God of the Dead, but of the Living : which had you considered, you might have known that the Spirits of Men, though separate from their Bodies, are by the Power of God, (*the God of the Spirits of all Flesh*) still held in Life ; and that therefore he can and will by

by the same Power, according to the working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself, raise their Bodies, and unite them to their own Spirits: which Inferences being agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, and a true and right asserting of the Power of God, are *as Scripture*, of which ye being willingly or wilfully ignorant, have erred in this main Article.

Now though the *Sadduces* still persisted, after such Conviction, in their Error, saying that *there is no Resurrection*, and in opposition to the Doctrine of Christ, *Luke 20. 37, 38.* that *there is neither Angel nor Spirit*, yet the way of proving by Consequences is not less cogent or commendable.

And if the Resurrection might be thus proved, why not other Points? why not the baptizing of Infants?

It is true, the Resurrection is not Worship, yet it is an Article of Faith, which *1 Cor. 15.* if not believed, all our Worship is *13, 14, &c.* in vain: And though nothing is to be admitted into the Worship of God, as such, which is contrary to express Precept and Command by Consequences, yet these rightly drawn from Scripture, are no less a Rule for our Practice, than they are for our Faith.

Now tho the baptizing of Infants hath been abundantly proved from time to time by many plain and undeniable Consequences, rightly inferred from the Scriptures, which being Christ's way of proving, should satisfy us; yet since express Precept or Example are so much called for, let us a little enquire into that.

What

What the First Commission of Christ was about baptizing, is not recorded, but must be gathered from his Second Commission, and from the Practice of his Disciples, and Acts of the Apostles.

The Second Commission of Christ for baptizing, is *Mat. 28. 19. Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, &c.*

The Practice of the Disciples and Apostles was to baptize particular Persons, and with Parents their House and Household; as *Lydia* and all her Household, *Acts 16. 14, 15.* the Jailor and all his, *ver. 33.* and *Crispus* and all his House, *Chap. 18. 8.*

Quest. The Question is, Whether these were only Adult, or Adult and Infants?

Answ. Adult and Infants. These words, *Household, His, and House*, when spoken of Persons, being an Hebraism for *Children of the House*, who are the Seed of the House, *1 Sam. 2. 33. Deut. 25. 5. Mat. 5. 12, 19.* whether they be Infants or adult Children.

Thus *Gen. 34. 30. I and my House*; and *41. 13, 19. Pharaoh said, Take your Father, and your little ones, and your Wives, and come*; and *46. 31. My Brethren, and my Father's House are come. Numb. 16. 32. And the Earth opened her Mouth, and swallowed them up, and their Houses*, that is, their Sons and little Children, *ver.*

27. to wit, of Dathan and Abiram, Deut. 11. 6. whereas of *Korah* it was all the Men that appertained unto him, as in the same *32d Verse*, not his House, for *chap. 26. 11.* the Chil-

Children of Korah died not: Judg. 9. 16. Now therefore if ye have done truly—and dealt well with Jerubbaal and his House: (for my Father fought for you, &c. and ye are risen up against my Father's House, and have slain his Sons) If ye have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal and his House, then rejoyce, &c. 1 Sam. 3. 12, 13, 14. In that day I will perform against Eli all which I have spoken concerning his House, &c. 2 Sam. 3. 1, 6. Now there was long War betwixt the House of Saul, and the House of David, &c. And chap. 7. 16, 18, 19, 23, 29. Thine House shall be established, &c. And chap. 9. 3. And the King said, Is there not yet any of the House of Saul? And chap. 12. 10. Now the Sword shall not depart from thy House. 1 Kings 13. 34. And this thing became Sin to the House of Jeroboam. And chap. 21. 21, 22. And will take away thy Posterity;— And will make thy House like the House of Jeroboam. 1 Chron. 13. 14. The Lord blessed the House of Obed Edom; (that is, chap. 26. 4, 5, 6. his Children.) And chap. 1. 16, 43. David returned to bless his House. Psal. 114. 1. When Israel went out of Egypt, the House of Jacob from a People of a strange Language. Micah 2. 2. They oppress a Man and his House. Habbak. 2. Jer. 23. 34. 10. Thou hast consulted Shame to thine House. Luke 19. 9. This day is Salvation come to this House. Titus 1. 11. Who subvert whole Houses.

Add unto these Gen. 7. 1. And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou, and all thy House. So chap. 18. 19. I know Abraham, that he will command his Children, and Household after him (that is,

is, his Children who are his *Household* after him ; for no others of the Family, tho' it exclude not them, were properly his *Household* after him, but his Children, called his *Seed* after him.) Thus *ch. 30. 30.* And now when shall I (says Jacob) provide for mine own *House* also ? So *Exod. 12. 27.* It is the Sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, who passed over the Houses of the children of Israel, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our Houses. Thus *Deut. 25. 9.* So shall it be done unto the man that will not build up his brother's house. So *1 Tim. 3. v. 4, 5.* One that rules well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity : for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God ? And *Chap. 5. 8.* But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own *House*, which according to the same Apostle, *2 Cor. 12. 14.* is his Children, For the Children ought not to lay up for the Parents, but the Parents for the Children.

Thus we see the Hebraism of these Words ; *Household, His, and House* in Scripture, according unto which these Words in these three first cited Examples of *Lydia, the Tylor and Crispus*, are by some very great Interpreters rendred, *The Children of the House* ; and are necessarily to be so taken there, Infants not excepted, unless some sufficient reason can be given to the contrary.

Now the main Reason to the contrary given, is, That these *Houses* and *Households* who are said to be Baptized, were such as to whom the Word of the Lord is said to be spoken, and who are said to believe in the Lord, which it is pretended they could not do if spoken of Infants ; so that there were either

no Infants there, or no Infants there Baptized.

But this Reason is not sufficient, because it supposeth these *Houses* and *Housholds* to be said to have the Word of the Lord spoken to them, and to be said to Believe without the Parents, which ought not to be supposed.

First, it supposes these *Houses* and *Housholds* to be said to have the Word of the Lord spoken to them without the Parents, and so renders Infants incapable; whereas, take *House* and *Houshold* with *Parents*, and *Infants* have been, and so may be, of them to whom the Word of the Lord hath been spoken. Thus Children were of them to whom *Moses* made that great and solemn Exhortation *Deut.* 29. 2, 9, 10, 11. *And Moses call'd unto all Israel, and said unto them, — Keep therefore the word of this Covenant — Te stand all of you before the Lord your God; — your little Ones, your Wives, — that ye should enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his Oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day.* And of them to whom *Joshua* made that famous repetition of the Law, *Josh.* 8. 34, 35. *And afterwards he read all the words of the Law, the blessings and cursings according to all that is written in the book of the Law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the Congregation of Israel, with the Women and little Ones.*

And tho' it be said in *Nehem.* 8. 2, 3. *Men and Women, and all that could hear with understanding,* yet it is not said them only, as if Infants were excepted, neither doth it follow that they were; for we know that whatsoever the Law saith, it saith to them

them that are under the Law, *Rom. 3. 19.* And we are sure, that the Command of *Moses, Deut. 31. 11, 12, 13.* was, that the Solemnity there appointed, should be with the Women and Children. Also, when he call'd unto all *Israel, Deut. 29.* aforesaid, and made that Exhortation, *They stood before him with their little Ones, and their Wives.* Likewise, when *Joshua* made that Rehearsal of the Law, *Chap. 8.* *It was before the whole Congregation, with the Women and little Ones.* So *2 Chron. 20. 13.* *And all Israel stood before the Lord with their little Ones, their Wives and their Children.* Still Women with their little Ones and Children, as if such little Ones, as by reason of their Infancy did yet hang upon the tender Breast: agreeable unto that *Joel 2. 12.* *Turn ye unto me—with weeping and mourning: 13. rent your hearts,—15. Call a solemn Assembly. —16. Gather the People: sanctify the Congregation: assemble the Elders: gather the Children, and those that suck the Breast, &c.*

Not that Parents ought therefore to bring their little Ones at all times to the reading, and preaching of the Word; but shews that it was done upon some great and solemn Occasions, when they entered into Covenant with God, or the like; and that little Ones may be part of those to whom the Word of the Lord is spoken, *Act. 21. 5.*

It is granted, the Phrase and manner of speaking in Scripture is primarily accommodated to those who are adult, but not exclusively of Infants; for they, as *Israelites*, were of them to whom, saith the Apostle, *appertaineth the giving of the Law, Rom. 3. 19.* And, as *Jews, of them to whom were committed the Oracles of God, Rom. 3. 1, 2. Acts 7. 38.*

Secondly,

Secondly, this supposeth these *Houses* and *Housholds* to be said to Believe without the Parents, and so though it had instead of *House* and *Houshold*, been said, *their Children, little Ones, and Babes*; yet according to this supposal the meaning would have been made still the same; that this could not be of such in Age, but onely of such in quality and disposition; whereas, take it as it is, *Parents* and *House* together, and then *Infants* are not onely included, but chiefly intended, the Adult being for the most part at their own disposal, whilst the *Infants* were always at the disposal of their *Parents*, who themselves, whether *Heathens*, or *Jews*, being converted to the Faith of Christ, brought over theirs, all if possible, but be sure their *Infants*, to be of the same Faith with themselves; and it being Parent and House, and not House without the Parents, who are said to Believe; it shews it to be in a way of Covenant, which always includes the *Infants*: And thus as the *Infants* of *Heathens* were always reputed to be *Heathens*, and the *Infants* of *Jews* to be *Jews*, so the *Infants* of *Christians* to be *Christians*, (tho' not declaratively so, no more than the converted Adult until baptized) and may,

Mat. 18. 6. as *Infants* of such, as well be said to

Gal. 6. 10. Believe, as the *Infants* of Circumcised

Eph. 2. 19. Parents might be said, by being Circumcised, to become debtors to do

the whole Law, *Gal. 5. 2.* Or, by not being Circumcised, to break the Covenant, *Gen. 17. 14.*

Object. But it is said, *Faith comes by hearing,*

Rom. 10. 17. How then can *Infants* be said to Believe?

Ans. This goes upon the former mistake of putting

putting Parents and Infants asunder, for so it is said, *He that believeth not, shall be damned.* Mark 16. 16. *and is condemned already.* John 3. 18. Shall not Infants therefore be saved? God forbid, for tho' they cannot believe in all respects as the Adult do, yet they may be parties with their Parents in the covenanting part of their Parents Faith, as their Parents covenant for themselves and them; which is well illustrated by Parents making their Infants Parties with them in their own civil Contracts of Bonds and Leases, but is grounded only upon the Nature of the Covenant of God; and as this Faith comes to the Parents by hearing, so to their Infants in conjunction with them.

When therefore it is said such and such, as Namely, the *Tailor, Crispus*, and the *Nobleman*, John 4. 53. *believed with all their House*: this relates not so much to the great success the Gospel had in those times, tho' that was very great, as it doth to the Covenant of God with Parents and their Children; because no *House* is said to believe without the Parents, nor any Parents having *House* under their charge, without the *House*; which must therefore have a respect to Infants, Adult Persons sometimes believing, and not their Parents; and Parents, and not always the Adult.

An Husband might believe, and not the Wife; the Wife, and not the Husband: but tho' it be said, to a Husband, or a Wife, *Believe, and thou shalt be saved, and thy House*; yet it is not said to any Husband, *Believe, and thou shalt be saved, and thy Wife*; or to any Wife, *Believe, and thou shalt be saved, and thy Husband*; but only, *What knowest thou O Wife, whether thou shalt save thy Husband? Or, how know-*

est thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy Wife?
1 Cor. 7. 16.

Again, a Master might be Converted, and not the Servant; a Servant might be Called, and not the Master; but with considerable difference in respect to the *House*: for when the Master being a Parent, Believed, there Salvation came to the House, not so when only the Servant was Called, or did Believe; which is one Reason which the Apostle gives there, why a Brother or Sister being married, should not depart from, put away, or leave their Unbelieving Yoke-fellow, *ver.* 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Not why the Converted Servant should not leave his Unconverted Master, *ver.* 20, 21, 22, 23.

And this makes it more clear, That *House* in the Scripture must include Infants, in that an *House* is said to be saved, (that is to say, saved as to the outward means of Salvation; which to them who die in their Infancy may be to their Eternal Salvation; howsoever will be so to them who survive their Infancy, if they neglect not so great Salvation;) where the *Parents* are said to be saved, but not *House* said to be saved without the *Parents*. Thus when *Peter* was sent to *Cornelius*, Acts 11. it was to tell him words whereby *He*, and all his *House* should be saved: the same which *Paul* and *Silas* here said to the *Jailor*, Act. 16. And so to every *Parent*, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy *House*: which must be with respect to *Infants*; for as it would be hard to say, That *Infants* could not be of the *House* which was to be saved; so it would have been needless to say, The *House* was it, not for the *Infants* sake. The Adult of every *House*, if they Believed being saved, whether

ther the *Parents* did Believe or not ; so that exclude *Infants* from being of the *House*, and it makes all those grants of Salvation made to the *House* upon the *Parents* believing ; such as that to *Zachens*, *Luke 19. 9. This day Salvation is come to this House, forasmuch as he also is a Son of Abraham.* And here to the *Sailor*, *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy House*, to be superfluous, and insignificant : for the Adult of every *House*, as is said before, were saved, if they did Believe, though the *Parents* believed not, nor were saved ; but no *House* is said to be saved without the *Parents*.

Object. But when it is said, *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy House* : The meaning is, Thou thy self believing, shalt be saved, and thy House, if they believe ; and so respects only the Adult.

Answer. This cannot be the whole meaning, both because no *House* is said to be saved without the *Parents* ; and because this excludes *Infants* from being said here to be saved, as well as from being said to believe : When therefore it is said, *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy House*. It is meant of some benefit (that is, to be saved) that shall redound to the House by the *Parents* professing to believe ; which would not have redounded to it, if the *Parents* did not make the profession, which must have respect principally to the Infant Children, which the *Parents* have, or shall have afterwards. *Gen. 17. 7, 8.*

Add unto this, that the *House* was always baptized, when the *Parents* were baptized, but not *House* without the *Parents*. Thus it is, *Lydia*,

and her Household, the Jailor and all His, and *Crispus* with all his House.

Cesar and his Household were not baptized, because some of his Servants were so, whereas *Lydia* and *Stephanus* standing in a nearer relation to theirs, they being baptized, their House and Household were baptized also, and so all other Houses said, or that may be said to be baptized; if the Parents, their Households, but no Household without the Parents, though *Parent* is sometimes mentioned, and not the *House*, and sometimes the *House*, and not the *Parent*, *1 Cor.* 1. 15, 16. Now if when any Parents were baptized, their House, Household, and all theirs were baptized, unless any of the Adult refused for themselves; and no House or Household were baptized, where one or both the Parents were not so, it necessarily supposeth some Infants baptized in those baptized Families, since they that were of Age therein, who were baptized, were baptized upon their own account.

Object. But some may object; First, that Household and House are not always said to be baptized with Parents; it is not expressly said, *Acts* 18. 8. that the House of *Crispus* was baptized; nor doth the Apostle, *1 Cor.* 1. 15. reckon it amongst those whom he enumerates to have baptized there; so neither is it expressly said of the House of *Cornelius*, that it was baptized.

Answ. Be it so; yet so long as it is said of *Cornelius*, that he feared God with all his House, *Acts* 10. 2. and had Words sent unto him, whereby he and all his House should be saved, *Acts* 11. 14. and of *Crispus*, That he believed in the Lord with all his House: And that *Crispus* and *Cornelius* themselves

selves were baptized; it is all one as if it had been expressly said, that all their House were baptized with them. Nay further, though it be not expressly said of *Zaccheus*, and that Noble-Man, *John* 4. 53. that they were baptized, yet nothing can be more evident; for though Christ baptized not, yet his Disciples did, and that as a great part of their Employment during Christ's Abode with them, for they baptized more than *John*, *John* 4. 1. Now they baptizing so many, who should they baptize, if not them? and if them, why not their House and Households? For if others thus and so qualified were baptized, themselves and theirs, themselves and all their House, why not these, being qualified after the same manner, baptized, they, themselves and theirs, themselves and all their House?

Which that they were, is sufficiently confirmed by this, That though it be not expressly said in any of the Gospels, that the Disciples of Christ baptized any particular Persons or Households; yet when we come to the Acts of the Apostles, by whose proceeding then we may see what was their Practice all along before then, as also *1 Cor.* 1. 15. we have a clear and particular account not only of the baptizing of single Persons, but also of the baptizing with Parents, their House and Households. And this was always taken for granted, else we can assign no reason why the Apostle instancing in the baptizing of *Crispus* in the aforesaid *1 Cor.* 1. 15. names him singly, and mentions not his House; and may be one reason why the Apostle there saith, that he was not sent to baptize, but to preach the Gospel; namely, because that if he had baptized all that he had converted, especially where Parents and Households

were concerned, it would have hindered his preaching: But as Christ taught, and his Disciples baptized, so the Apostles might preach, and others under them sometimes baptize those whom they had converted. Thus it was at *Corinth*, when many of the *Corinthians*, hearing *Paul*, believed: and so we may suppose at *Jerusalem* upon *Peter's* Sermon, *Acts* 2: 41.

And it is to be observed that when the Apostle *Paul* gives us the names but of three which he remembered he had baptized of those many *Corinthians*, who are said to believe, *Acts* 18. 8. that of two of them, to wit, *Crispus* and *Stephanas*, it is expressly said, Them and their House; for though in the *Corinthians* it is singly *Crispus*, as is observed before, yet in the *Acts* it is *Crispus* with all his House; and if *Gaius* was *Gaius the Host*, which supposes an Household, and *Gaius Paul's Host*, which supposes a baptized Household, then the same may be said of him also.

Object. 2. But *House* and *Household* is not always an Hebraism, for Children, especially Infant-Children; for *1 Cor.* 16. 15. it is said, *Ye know the House of Stephanas, that it is the first-Fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the Ministry of the Saints*: Now Infants could not do this.

Ans. Put *House* and *Parents* here asunder, and then none of the House could be Infants; but as Infants joined with Parents, are said, *Jer.* 35. to be the House, and to be spoken to, *ver.* 2. to answer, *ver.* 6. and to obey, perform and do, *ver.* 8, 10, 14, 16, 18. so Infants may be said to be of the House

House of *Stephanas*, who addicted themselves to the Ministry of the Saints.

Object. 3. But it is said, *John 4. 1. That Christ made and baptized more Disciples than John*; now *made* seems to imply only Adult.

Ans. If by *Disciples* here be meant only those who did baptize, for Christ baptized not, but his Disciples, (that is, one another first, and then others) then they could be none but Adult; but if by Disciples be meant also (as it must) those who were baptized, then it comprehends those *all Men* said to come unto Christ, *John 3. 26.* such as those *Multitudes*, *Mat. 14. 13 to 22.* amongst whom many were Children.

Object. 4. But it is said, *Acts 8. 12. They were baptized, both Men and Women.*

Ans. None can restrain these words, *Men and Women*, to Persons of such an exact Age; neither because it is said, *Men and Women*, doth it hinder Infants from being understood also, any more than that saying, *Nehem. 8. 3. Ezra read the Law to the Men and Women, and to all that could hear with Understanding*, doth hinder that their little ones were some of the Assembly, which that it did not, is cleared before in *page 14, 15.* When therefore it is said *Men and Women*, the Sense is not, that none but of such an Age, were or may be baptized, but that there was no distinction of Sex in Baptism, as there had been in Circumcision; for this, and that the things concerning the Kingdom of God were preached to them, *ver. 12.* being *Samaritans*; and that thereby Salvation came to their Houses, and that of such was the Kingdom of God, it was that there was

great Joy in the City, *ver.* 8. And it being *Crispus* singly in the *Corinthians*, which in the *Acts* is *Crispus* with all his House, it is a further Confirmation of this Sense; since Infants may as well be couch'd under the terms of Men and Women, as *Crispus's* Household under his Name.

Object. 5. But what if there were no Infant-Children in the Households of *Lydia*, of the Jailor, and of *Crispus*, how then could there be Infant-Children there baptized?

Ans. If there were no Infant-Children in the Households of *Lydia*, of the Jailor, and of *Crispus*, they could not be baptized: but then this Objection seems to grant, that if there were, they were baptized: Now that there were Infant-Children in those Households, (and none dare say there were not) appears from these following Considerations.

1. That *House*, *Household*, and *His*, (which are the Words here used) are, as proved before, when spoken of Persons, an Hebraism, so common and familiar to express Children by, whether Infants or Adult, that there is none more frequent and ordinary.

2. That suppose these Households to be without Infant-Children, and one may as well suppose all the Houses and Households, whose Parents were baptized in those times, which could not be few, to be without Infant-Children, which is a thing not to be supposed.

3. That an House being said to believe, to be saved, and to be baptized, where the Parents are said to believe, to be saved, and to be baptized, and no House said to believe, to be saved, and to be baptized, but whose Parents are said to believe, to be saved,

ved, and to be baptized, it must be with respect to their Children, especially their Infant-Children, the Adult being to make Profession for themselves.

And it being not only the Apostles *Peter* and *Paul*, but all the Disciples and Apostles of Christ who they baptized, that is to say, with Parents, their House and Household, and no House and Household without the Parents, there can be nothing more plain, than that it was the Apostolical Practice in baptizing Parents and their Households, to baptize their Babes and Infants.

Object. 6. But when Christ renewed his Commission for baptizing, *Mat. 28. 19.* he mentioned not Infants.

Ans. He then mentioned Infants as much as Adult, for he mentioned neither of them expressly.

Object. 7. But we have fresh Examples of Adult Persons being baptized, not so of Infants.

Ans. The express Examples of those whom the Disciples and Apostles of Christ baptized, are of two sorts; the One of particular Adult Persons, the Other of Parents and their House, (for a Man and his House is Parent and House) which being not only Parents and Adult, but Parent and Infants also, and as to Baptism especially Infants, as is made good all along before; the baptizing of *Lydia*, the Jailor, *Crispus*, and the like, and their House in conjunction with them, affords us as express Example of the baptizing of Infants, as of the baptizing of any Adult therein, and consequently as of the baptizing of any other adult Persons whatsoever.

Object. 8. But Christ was not baptized in his Infancy, and he knew when rightly to be baptized.

Ans.

Answ. This makes nothing against the baptizing of Infants; for as there were none then to baptize him; so his Baptism being in order to his Ministry, into which he was not to enter by the Law (which he came to fulfil, *Matth.* 5. 17.) till his being about thirty years of Age; he was not to be baptized till he had accomplished that Age. Besides, it is a Question whether the Baptism by *John* the Baptist, and the Baptism of Christ by his Disciples and Apostles, were one and the same: for tho there be much said for it, and many Instances of Parallels drawn whereby they are made to seem so, yet if it belonged unto Christ ministerially to institute and ordain the Sacraments of the New Testament, and if he could not ministerially do that till he was duly ordained and admitted into the Function and Office of his publick Ministry, which was not till his Baptism by *John*, then *John's* Baptism could not be a Gospel-Sacrament, and if not a Gospel-Sacrament, then his, and Christ's Baptism, though they might agree in many other things, could not be one and the same.

Now as Christ's not being baptized in his Infancy is no Argument against the baptizing of Infants: so his Baptism, and the Baptism of *John* not being one and the same, makes the Name of *Baptist* an improper distinction for such as profess the Baptism of Christ; as also that though the Disciples of Christ, who had Commission from him to baptize, baptized those among themselves into the Baptism of Christ, who before had been baptized into the Baptism of *John*, as appears clearly by comparing *John* 1. 35, 37, 40, &c. with *John* 4. 1, 2. and than which there is no clearer Proof of their being baptized at all; yet the rebaptizing of any now is altogether groundless and unwarrantable.

Object. 9. But what benefit of Baptism are Infants capable of more, than they are capable of the benefit of the Lord's-table? are they not as capable to receive a small quantity of Bread and Wine, as to be Baptized?

Answer. This is to arraign the Institutions of God, the profit of which, namely, That of Circumcision, which included Infants, *Gen. 17. 12.* The Apostle resolves to be *much every way, chiefly, because unto them were committed the Oracles of God, Rom. 3. 1, 2.* It arraigns also the Commands of God mentioned before, *Deut. 31. 11, 12, 13. Joel 2. 12.* And the express practice of the Apostles, who when they baptized *Parents*, baptized their *House*, and *Household*; not so when they administered to them the Lord's Supper, it being not there, *a man and his House*, but, *let a Man examine Himself.*

Object. 10. But Churches by means of *Pædobaptism* become unholy, and unholiest.

If Churches become Unholy by means of *Pædobaptism*, then by what means did the Primitive Churches become unholy, with all that unholiness that is charged upon them in the several Epistles directed to them before, and in the Revelations, if it was by means of *Pædobaptism*, then *Pædobaptism* was in use in those times; if it was not by means of *Pædobaptism*, then Churches may become unholy by some other means. And if History does not wrong the Churches of the Antipædobaptists, they have not been so holy as they should have been: Now by what means came they to be unholy, and unholiest? As for such who being baptized in their Infancy do not answer the Profession of Faith and of a good Conscience, whereinto they were

were baptized, but do afterwards make Shipwrack of that Profession, and persist therein: *it had been better for them not to have known the Way of Righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment once delivered to them;* but is no argument, why none but Adult Persons should be baptized, for these also may make defection, unless we will confute all experience; and then what way or course may, or ought to be taken with them upon this occasion, the same may be taken with others upon the like, and so Christianity and Holiness be preserved and secured in the Churches of God as much this way, as it is pretended it may be in the other.

But there remains two things yet to be resolved; in resolving of which it will be proved, That Parents, and Parents only, where they may be had, have right to present their Children unto God in Baptism.

Quest. 1. The First, how do Infants covenant, and engage to be God's People, or take Christ to be their Lord in Baptism?

Ans. By their Parents, who having first given their own selves unto the Lord, are bound to give and dedicate their Children, both Infants and Adult, as their Seed unto him also: And for this cause it was, that no House was baptized without the Parents; the Adult covenanting and engaging for themselves, and the Parents for the Infants; Parents doing of which for their Infants, being as *Joshua*, resolving that *he* and his *House* would serve the Lord, whilst the Infants promising by their Parents, is as we may so say, as *Levies* paying Tithes in the Loins of *Abraham*.

And

And tho' that may be verified of Infants, when their Parents covenant for them in Baptism, which Christ said to *Peter*, *What I do thou knowest not now.* Yet this can be no bar to this practice, that Promise, (*but thou shalt know hereafter*) being as applicable to them, as it was to him.

And truly, they who go about to dispute themselves and others out of Infant-baptism by suchlike Arguments, saying, 'How do Infants know that their Parents covenant for them? And how can any after Infancy tell what engagement lies upon them thereby?' may as well say, How do we know who was the Father that begat us, or the Mother that brought us forth? and so cast off that great Commandment with Promise, *Honour thy Father, and thy Mother.*

Quest. 2. The second is, Why then are not Parents, but others required in their stead, to answer for their Children in Baptism?

Ans. Some have thought, that the requiring of Others, instead of the Parents, to answer for their Children in Baptism, was not brought into a Canon, till the Clergy was prohibited Marriage, and it may be so. But waving that the usual answer is, That however Parents might be chiefly concern'd in this at the first, yet because Parents might be taken away by Death, driven away by Persecution, or by some other means necessarily detain'd, when their Children were to be baptized, the Church might require that Others should appear for them; by requiring of which, the Church doth not exclude any Title which the Children have by the right of the Parents: for the Sponsors may be supposed to appear in a threefold capacity. First, as representing

ing the Parents in offering up the Children unto Baptism, and thereby challenging in their Right. Secondly, by representing the Children in the Answers that are made in Baptism. Thirdly, in their own capacity, when they promise to take care of the good Education of the Children in the Principles of the Christian Faith.

But tho' this may be done in defect of the Parents, yet that Parents when they may be had, should be quite jussled out by these, who were taken in only to supply their defects, seems not only to undervalue, but oppose the Wisdom of the first times, and doth too much resemble the setting light by *Father and Mother*, complain'd of *Ezek. 22. 7.*

And whereas it is fairly pretended, that tho' one of the reasons (to wit, the Persecution of those Times) which made Sureties more necessary in the first Ages of the Christian Church, hath long since ceased; yet that they are continued for good ends, as (not only to offer up, represent and promise, but) to covenant on the Childrens behalf, and secure the Church that they may be brought to Confirmation, and own their Covenant hereafter.

These are Reasons why there should be some Sureties for Infants; but none at all, why Others rather than the Parents, but altogether on the contrary; for Parents are not only much more responsible for all those good ends, but are confessedly those who were chiefly made use of in the first Ages of the Christian Church, till the Persecution of those Times cut them off. Now if Persecution was one main thing that afterwards hindred Parents, and that it was a Persecution so to do; why it should be thought a thing expedient in it self to hinder

hinder them now, by still requiring Others in their stead, the reason ceasing, is very difficult to resolve.

Nor is it so easy and small a matter to be Sponsor, or Surety in this Case, *Ecc. 5. 2.* as many it may be make it to be; nor to the 8th. a Charge to be taken so rashly, and inconsiderately, as we may fear is done by the most. What Parents may do for their own Children, who are taken into Covenant with them, is one thing; and what they may do for the Children of Others, who stand not in that relation with them, is another. Every Christian is obliged more or less, if not as a Witness, yet as a Monitor, to help each other in their Faith and Manners; but for any to Covenant with God, to Promise and Vow in the presence of God, and of his People solemnly assembled, to be such or such an one's particular Christian Monitor, and in their own capacity to promise as a Surety, to take care of their good Education in the Principles of the Christian Faith, not being their Parents, or where the Parents may be had, is a thing of an higher nature, and not without absolute necessity, to be either required, or undertaken.

And though the use of Sureties should be so early in the Christian Church, as some pretend, that it is not easy to fix the time of its beginning; or, that it should be so ancient, as some think, among the *Jews*; as the time of *Isaiah*, who took unto himself Witnesses to record, *Isaiah 8. 2.*

Yet what are Sureties? The time of whose beginning it is not easy to fix, to those made use of from the beginning. Or what are Witnesses to Sureties? Were Witnesses anciently Sureties? Or must

must we use Sureties, because the Prophet took unto himself Witnesses?

And as to the Reason of the thing: Is it to offer up, dedicate, and devote Children unto God, (by their Ministry, whose Office it is) and represent them in Answers to be made in Baptism? Who are more proper for these than the Parents, whose they are, who are Parties with them, and who must answer in some respects to God for them?

Is it to Promise, Vow, and Covenant on their behalf? Who are more fit for this than the Parents themselves, with whom the Covenant is made for themselves and theirs, and without which, Sureties, and all their promising, vowing, and covenanting would signify nothing; Children having no right to Baptism, from the promising, vowing, and covenanting of Others; for so the Children of Infidels might have right, but as the Parents themselves promise, vow, and covenant for them: And if other Sureties do challenge but upon the Parents right, why may not the Parents themselves challenge upon their own?

Is it to undertake for the Childrens good Education in the Principles of the Christian Faith? who are laid under such strict Commands, *Psa. 78. 5, 6.* bound in such indispensable Obligations, charged with that care, and trust, *Prov. 19. 18.* and furnished with those fair and advantageous opportunities for the discharge thereof, as the Parents? Doth not even Nature it self teach us? And unto whom hath God said at any time concerning the Children of Others, as unto Parents concerning theirs, *Then shalt teach them diligently unto thy Children, and shalt talk of*

of them when thou sittest in thy House, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up, Deut. 6. 7. And when the Apostle saith, Ye Fathers, provoke not your Children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, Eph. 6. 4. Of whom principally saith he this, of the Fathers of their Flesh, or of some others?

And for the security of the Church, that the Children may be brought to Confirmation, and own their Covenant; Wherein are the Parents less responsible, or more insufficient than the Sureties? It is the Parents that God looks after; and if they bring up their Children for him, do they not bring them up for the Church? What needs the Church then any other Sureties? Or, wherein is it better secured by them? As for Sureties, it is well known, that any are generally accepted of: besides, some do but stand for other Sureties; and some are Sureties for the Children of several Families; And what more common, than for the younger sort of Sureties, to be removed into other Habitations and Abodes? And for those of greater years, to have Charges of their own, sufficient to take up all their care and endeavours? Moreover, are not Families very often flitting, and changing their Dwellings? How then, it may be again asked, Is the Church more or better secured by Sureties, than it would be by Parents? whose Security, was it taken, would be something; whereas that of Sureties is, besides the uncertainty of it, usually but in complement, having a Form of Godliness, but little or nothing of the Power of it; so that if it should be demanded, What advantage, as to these things, hath the Church?

Or, what profit is there by them unto the Parents, or their Children? Or, what Glory unto God? it would be hard to say, *Much every way*. Besides, is not Filthiness and Uncleanness hereby covered and masked? which it may be hoped would be shamed out, if Parents only were required personally to present their Infants.

To sum up All: Are any proper and competent to represent the Children of others, to offer them up in Baptism unto God, to promise therein for their vertuous and religious Education, to covenant with God for them, secure the Church, and receive the Charge and Exhortation given in their behalf? and must they not be much more proper and competent for their own? Or, if they be not proper and competent for their Own, how come they to be proper and competent for the Children of Others?

Yet this hinders not, but that Others may hand Children from the Parents to the Minister; or stand as Witnesses of their Baptism; so they proceed not to serve in things appertaining to the Parents.

For the Service and Worship of God requiring personal Attendance, and it not being in the power of any to require the performance of one Man's Religious Duty of another; or of one Man, to perform another Man's Religious Duty for him. So that if any should require One man to go to the Church, serve God, partake of the Lord's Supper for another; Or, if any should pretend that he doth all these things, by another's doing it for him, it would be nothing. Even so to offer up, devote, and dedicate Children unto God in Baptism, to Covenant for them, and therein solemnly to promise

mise and vow the Religious Education of them, all which are part of the Christian Religion, and Divine Worship, is no discharge to the Parents, whose Part and Duty it is, let them pretend what they will of doing it by others, unless they themselves do perform it. And therefore that Parents should be required and necessitated to do it by others, or it must not be done at all, when they themselves may do it, is a matter that deserves the most serious consideration of those who challenge not a dispensing or infallible Power.

If any should think that Parents therefore may not answer, promise, vow or covenant for their Children in Baptism, because this would be to serve God for them.

It follows not: For when Parents answer, promise, vow and covenant in their Childrens Name, they do not perform their Childrens Duty for them, but thereby engage them to it, and perform their own: And so far as the Parents Act of giving up, and dedicating their Children unto God in a way of Covenant, and therein answering for them, is a Work of Necessity and Mercy, it is no more a performing of their Childrens Duty, or a serving of God for them, than praying to God for them, or being their Mouth to God in Praise, is.

To conclude; Since Suretiship, and making Vows for others, is no light and easy matter; that this for Children, being in things of the greatest moment, and unto God who will not be mocked, is none of the meanest; and that it is not in our Power to substitute one for another, or others in our stead to serve God for us, nor safe to trifle with sacred things: how well would it be if that Suretiship, which is

founded upon Covenant-Right, accommodated with the greatest Advantages, most expedient in it self, most competent for all the good Ends of Sur-tiship, most unquestionable, and which was from the beginning, to wit the Parental, was always required; unto the discharge of which, if such, whose Ministerial Calling and Emploiment it is, would superadd their Endeavours by a frequent assisting of the Parents upon all convenient Occasions, remembering them always, that *he is not a Christian which is one outwardly, (Rom. 2. 28, 29.) neither is that Baptism which is outward in the Flesh; but he is a Christian which is one inwardly, and Baptism is that of the Heart in the Spirit, and not in the Letter, whose Praise is not of Men, but of God:* How useful might this be, and more religious, than for them, waving the Parents, to bind heavy Burdens and grievous to be born, and lay them on other Mens Shoulders, and they themselves not move them with one of their Fingers?

Now the God of Patience and Consolation grant us to be like-minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus; that we may with one Mind and one Mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; Rom. 15. 5, 6.

Amen.

FINIS.

An

An Appendix.

AS to Christ his being baptized when 30 Years Old, at the beginning of his Ministry, (mentioned here pag. 26.) and also about the Differences and Agreements of Christ his Baptism and *John's*, let the inquisitive Reader peruse and pause upon those brief, but excellent touches hereupon, which that diligent Reader of the Sacred Scriptures, Mr. *Samuel Clark*, hath lately given us, in his Notes on *Matth. III. 6, 16.* Tho I confess that Christ's Plea for his being baptized by *John*, [*Thus it becomes us to fulfil all Righteousness*] I cannot yet say that I understand it in its utmost reach and force to my full satisfaction. That Christ was bound to (and so must) fulfil the Law of *Moses*, and *John's* Prophetic Mission, and the whole Law of Mediation which his Father laid him under, and he so voluntarily obliged himself unto, admits no Doubt, and needs no Proof: But what particular Law Christ here respected as to this Instance, I cannot say I yet fully know.

As to *Sponsors*, (God-fathers and God-mothers)

1. Let them be serious, and devoted Persons unto God and Christ, themselves. 2. Capable of Receiving, and likely and willing to fulfil this Trust. And, 3. then appear and stand as the Substitutes and Representatives of Absent Parents through Necessity; or Pro-parents, where Parents are dead, or manifestly give their Children wholly to them; or, as in Conjunction and Concurrence with the Parents, for the more effectual

An Appendix.

effectual Christian Education of the baptized Children. And then less may be said against them, and more for them than otherwise. And then their Testimony will be more credible, that Persons offering their Seed to God, are such as very probably have a right thereto. That the Persons offered are baptized; and that in case the Parents die, or deny the Faith, or prove grossly negligent as to the performance of their Trust, care will yet be taken about the fit Christian Education of their baptized Seed. But why Parents (where they can) should not Solemnly and Personally offer their own natural Seed to God, and personally profess and promise, I know not: Seeing this renews their Christian Profession, reinforces their Christian Obligations and Advantages upon themselves; hands down the Essentials of Christianity from Age to Age; calls other Parents to reflect upon themselves as to their Christian Advantages, Performances, and Concerns; and quickens all the Baptized to their Work and Hope. I will not vouch for every Word and Thing in this, or any meer humane Book; but I think it no lost time or labour to read this small Tract.

M. S.



July 15. 99.

Mr.

*Mr. Joseph Whiston hath published these
Treatises about this Subject, viz.*

1. **I**nfant-Baptism from Heaven, and not of Men; or a moderate Discourse concerning the Baptism of the Infant-Seed of Believers.

2. Infant-Baptism from Heaven, and not of Men, the 2d Part: Or, an Answer to Mr. *Danvers's* Treatise of Baptism. Wherein Infants Right to Baptism is further confirmed.

3. An Essay to revive the Primitive Doctrine and Practice of Infant-Baptism, in the Resolution of Four Questions.

1. What are the Reasons of God's appointing the Token of his Covenant to be applied to the Infant-Seed of his People.

2. What is the Good or Benefit they receive thereby.

3. What is the Duty of Parents towards their Children, as bearing the Token of the Covenant.

4. What is the Improvement that Children, as grown up to Years of Maturity, may and ought to make of the Token as applied to them in their Infancy.

4. Infant-Baptism plainly proved. A Discourse wherein certain Select Arguments for Infant-Baptism, formerly syllogistically handled, are now abbreviated, and reduced to a plain Method for the Benefit of the Unlearned. With a large Epistle to the Pious and Learned among the *Antipædobaptists*, especially the Authors of the late Confession of their Faith.

5. A brief Discourse concerning Man's natural proneness to, and tenaciousness of Errors. Whereunto are added, some Arguments to prove, That that Covenant entred with *Abraham*, Gen. 2. 7. is the Covenant of Grace.

6. The Right Method for the proving of Infant-Baptism. With some Reflections on some late *Treatises* against Infant-Baptism.

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